

probation

gloucestershire

local area newsletter

NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE
for England and Wales

Gloucestershire

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... well done to all
concerned

celebrating SUCCESS

The probation service is committed to addressing the fact that many offenders do not feel confident with literacy and numeracy skills. Many missed out on schooling and did not have the opportunity to gain good qualifications. For these men and women, improving basic skills is often the first step towards vocational training and gaining steady employment. Increased confidence also helps them in their everyday personal life and family responsibilities. The Education, Training and Employment (ETE) team works with offenders across a range of skills, from the most basic reading and number skills up to GCSE equivalent qualifications.

Basic skills targets achieved

National Probation targets reflect the importance attached to this. For Gloucestershire, the target for 2004-5 was 273 basic skills starts and 68 awards (double the level set the previous year.

Nationally, there are three definitions of a "start" – an offender attending a single 3-hour taster session, or attending at least 3 tuition sessions, or completing an initial assessment and signing a learning plan. By using all three approaches in Gloucestershire Probation Area (GPA), we have maximised the opportunities and exceeded the targets. A major development this year was the introduction of a taster within the Community Punishment induction session – the whole day is now integrated to include a number of ETE activities and the initial literacy and numeracy assessments. We have also developed STEP-UP (our Step Up to Employment programme), with a mixture of college-taught provision on probation premises and at Gloucestershire Reintegration Service (GRS), Learndirect courses at Barbican House (now moved to Oakes House), referrals to community-based courses, and 1:1 tuition by ETE staff. By the end of March, GPA had recorded **334 starts**.

To achieve the "awards" target, offenders have to gain nationally-accredited qualifications. The highest level is equivalent to GCSE. The tests can be taken on-line on college premises or paper-based in probation offices and at GRS. The Learning and Skills Council required these awards to come from at least 41 individuals. We were thrilled by the achievements of the offenders – by the end of March **42 offenders** had gained **77 awards**. Many had never gained any qualifications before.

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celebrating **SUCCESS** cont.

We need to appreciate how much work this means for the offenders. Over the year we monitored the number of hours that offenders in GPA spent in basic skills tuition. The total was **2,337 hours**. This is a fantastic achievement – it was a big increase from the previous year and explains why the 'offender/students' have done so well. National targets could not have been met by the ETE team working in isolation. We have needed the referrals and motivational support for offenders from case managers, the willingness of staff in the Community Punishment Unit to develop a joint approach for the Enhanced Community Punishment induction, the ETE work with offenders on Drug Treatment and Testing Orders (DTTOs) within GRS, the support of Gloucestershire Probation Area (GPA) management, as well as our external partnerships. As a team, we are really grateful to all our colleagues.

Margaret Lear
ETE Worker

a year of **SUCCESS** for the ete team

The ETE team has had another challenging but successful year. With the help of all colleagues we have exceeded our basic skills starts and awards targets (see front page for details) and positioned ourselves for the coming challenges of 2005/6. All the ETE team have, or are about to gain, an NVQ level 3 or 4 in Advice and Guidance and we have gained the Matrix Award for the quality of guidance delivered and the management systems in place.



The team has welcomed Robin Buchanan and Karen Jones as new ETE workers and they have forged effective links with colleagues delivering ECP/Unpaid Work so that all offenders going through their ECP induction are aware of the ETE services available. This complements the introduction of automatic referral of all new orders to the ETE team so that we not only make early contact with offenders but also support case managers in delivering national standards.

The team has also won a number of income generating contracts such as the IAG contract (more details below from Ronnie Hirst) and we have recently learnt that we (GPA and GRS) have been successful in winning a £275,000 co-finance contract from the Learning and Skills Council which will provide support and training for offenders to achieve a recognised qualification - a key step towards employment and the reduction in offending behaviour that this brings.

Meanwhile we are waiting to hear the outcome of regional bids to provide an ETE service for both offenders in custody and in the community. The South West is one of three pilot areas where different elements of offenders "Learning Journey" – Guidance, basic skills provision, vocational course provision etc are being tendered for. No decisions have been made to date so inevitably there are some anxieties about the future. However, with the ETE teams substantial record of delivery there is also much evidence and grounds for optimism.

Erik Wilkinson
ETE Manager

information, advice and guidance

sub-contract with nextstep

Gloucestershire Probation Area is part of this Learning and Skills Council funded network which provides quality IAG to adults. This contract brings money into the service and provides resources, support and external training which helps the ETE team to deliver initial guidance sessions for offenders.

As part of this network I have been able to support partner agencies by providing information and advice about the disclosure of criminal convictions. This has included a workshop session at Nelson House Trust and providing support to nextstep (IAG) staff working within the resettlement team at Gloucester Prison.

Ronnie Hirst
ETE Officer

building on our community links

For the Community Punishment/Unpaid Work Unit, the greatest success operationally has been the way staff have dealt with the changes that have taken place over the last year. This has included the moving of the Unit, from Philip Street to Bewick House, coupled with the loss of offender assistance with the cleaning, sorting and loading of vehicles. This has led to a major re-think in the way that we operate.

Staff responded admirably to this challenge. We are still able to provide an excellent standard of service to the offenders and the community at large, as well as making a good a good impact on our target figures. All staff should be congratulated on their problem solving approach to the situation.

A new focus has been that of "Civil renewal" a government initiative, which allows the community at large to have a greater input into what we do for them. The work required is normally directed towards "smartening up " areas of towns and cities which are becoming somewhat run down.



In October 2004 we formed a working partnership with Cheltenham Borough Homes Neighbourhood Wardens Service. Working in the St Pauls area we have removed large amounts of graffiti and tidied gardens of untenanted properties. The Wardens act as our community link in the area.



Before clearing graffiti work started in Cheltenham

We have taken part in the "Clean up Gloucester" campaign which included graffiti removal and churchyard clearance. Obviously we still have more to do on this, but we have established a firm foundation for the future.



Before, and work in progress, at Christ Church Hall - part of the 'Clear Up Gloucester' campaign



And finally, three members of the CP team have been successful in gaining posts as case managers with another going to the Programmes Team. This increases the number of staff who started their career with the Unit and gone on to develop within the Service. A positive result for the Service.

Allan Thompson
ECP Placements Manager

staff movements - april 2005

New Staff

Staff Member	Post	Based At	Start Date
Karen Salcombe	Receptionist	Head Office	28.02.05
Richard Redway	Hostel Relief Supervisor	Ryecroft	19.02.05
Masimba Uzande	Hostel Relief Supervisor	Ryecroft	05.03.05
Peter Edwards	Administrator/Receptionist	Oakes House	11.04.05
Bethan Simpson	LCJB Communications Officer	Head Office	11.04.05
Samantha Thomas	Hostel Relief Supervisor	Ryecroft	09.04.05
Emma McGrath	Permanent Hostel Supervisor	Ryecroft	02.04.05
Brendan Watson	Hostel Relief Supervisor	Ryecroft	18.04.05

Transfers

Staff Member	Post Transferred To	Based At	Start Date
Sandeep Thandi	PPT East	Cheltenham	04.04.05

Retirements

Staff Member	Post	Based At	Date
Judy Eaketts	SASO	Barbican	31.03.05
Di Roe	PO	Cheltenham	31.03.05

Leavers

Staff Member	Post	Based At	Leaving Date
Angela Evans	Probation Officer	Barbican	06.02.05
Julie Gerrard	Programme Worker	Oakes House	04.02.05
Donna White	TPO	Barbican	25.02.05
Angela Mayo	Receptionist	Head Office	25.03.05
Chris Biggs	PO	Barbican	12.04.05
Jonquil Richards	Treatment Supervisor	Oakes House	29.04.05
Jennie Miller	Senior Practitioner (West)	Barbican	10.05.05

Maternity Leave

Staff Member	Post	Based At	Leaving Date
Toni Large	Finance Assistant	Head Office	13.03.05
Eve-Louise McClay	Admin Officer	CS	20.02.05
Joanne Tyler	Admin Officer	Cheltenham	22.04.05
Lisa Belshaw	PO Programmes	Oakes House	22.05.05
Clare Sims	PO Offender Management West	Barbican	29.05.05
Charlie Kawczynski	PA	Head Office	29.05.05

Returners

Kate Asher	PO Offender Manager West	Barbican	11.04.05
Mary Rea	PO Offender Manager West	Barbican	03.05.05

facilities management services

commercial estate

Commercial estate refers to all buildings apart from Ryecroft Approved Premises.

The current contractor for this is MITIE Managed Services. This contract covers the following services:-

- Cleaning & Waste Management
- Mechanical & Electrical repair & replacement
- Building fabric maintenance
- Grounds maintenance
- Pest control
- Statutory inspections (eg. electrical testing, fire appliance testing)
- Planned building maintenance
- Security



Requests for repairs are placed through a Helpdesk (tel. 01257 236575) but the preferred method of requesting work is via MITIE's email address:
npsenquiries@mitie.co.uk

All requests for repair work should go through the nominated building representative.

Requests for non-maintenance work such as the provision of new shelves, minor decoration work and the provision of new blinds should go to the Helpdesk. However, there is no guarantee that MITIE will have funds to undertake all such work and if this happens they will refer the job back to us to finance locally.

ryecroft approved premises

The current contractor is Morrisons and this contract covers the following services:-

- Catering
- Cleaning
- Waste Disposal
- Laundry Equipment
- Building fabric maintenance
- Grounds maintenance
- Statutory inspections.

All requests for work are placed through a Helpdesk (tel. 0800 2794888). There is also an email address to request work:
helpdesk@morrison-fm.com

Chris Westhead
Facilities Manager

working with offending behaviour (nvq level 3)

In recognition of the national prominence of NVQs and the benefits they can offer both to the individual candidate and the organisation itself, in December 2003 Gloucestershire Probation Area funded nine staff to commence NVQs. Six Probation Service Officer staff commenced their 'Work With Offending Behaviour' level 3 NVQ – Susan Cottrell, Jean Cudmore, James Fletcher, Greg Morgan, Tanya Phelps and Siân Worrall. Three Probation Officers, Lisa Belshaw, Kate Gartner and Will Gough, also commenced NVQs, in their case, the A1 NVQ Assessor Award. To obtain their award, each works with two of the level 3 candidates.

By the end of June 2005, the level 3 candidates are expected to complete their full award. Their 'Work With Offending Behaviour' NVQ consists of ten units, five of which are mandatory and five optional. They can select their optional units from 42 available units.

The benefits of undertaking an NVQ for individuals include that:

- NVQs are a nationally recognised award
- Candidates can gather evidence of their achievement at different times, places and from different roles
- They provided a process within which individuals can refresh and confirm their knowledge, understanding, values and skills.

In short, because NVQs are awarded on the basis of achievement and competence, achieving one confirms that the person can apply the skills, values, knowledge and understanding that are needed as part of their work. They validate that the person is competent in the work that they do. Candidates demonstrate their competence by putting together a portfolio of evidence gained from their usual work. The Service supports candidates by allowing them time to attend meetings with their assessors and other candidates to plan the work, identify and produce some of the evidence. However, each individual does need drive and motivation to put their portfolios together, as this has to be done outside work time.

More staff will be invited to apply to undertake level 3 NVQs in late spring. If anyone wishes to have more information, please **contact Paula Mercouris based at Cheltenham, or Kathy Kerr-Rettie at Head Office.**

admin nvqs in gloucestershire

At the moment we have 10 administrative staff in Gloucestershire working toward their NVQ Level 3 Award, They are:- Angela Keeling, Laura Janes, Sophie Brown, Amanda Edwards, Lesley Middlecote, Carole Jonah, Margaret Harrigan, Sue Jones, Gill Martin & Maxine Bailey. We have also had 4 staff working towards Internal Verifier Awards (V1) and Assessor Awards (A1) and have made good progress so far. We now have 1 qualified Internal Verifier (Christine Smeaton) and 1 qualified Assessor (Elizabeth Moss) in the County, and 2 other people working towards their Assessor Award (Jane Bircher & Siân Glead).

We have also claimed for 11 Units from NVQ Level 3 ranging from:

- Maintain effective working relationships
- Contribute to the maintenance of a healthy, safe & productive working environment
- Support and record business meetings
- Organise repairs to premises and equipment.

We manage to meet on a monthly basis to work on the NVQs and to give encouragement and support to each other as a group. Well done to everyone involved – it is hard work but worthwhile. NVQ Level 3 in Administration is a City & Guilds Qualification and represents the skills and abilities of the administrative staff in our Service.

... well done to all concerned

For further information **contact: Christine Smeaton, SSM, Cheltenham**